



CITY OF WAUWATOSA
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COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
Tuesday, August 5, 2008 – 6:45 p.m.

PRESENT: Alds. Birschel, Donegan, Hanson, Jay, Krol, Maher, Mc Bride (7:28); Meaux, Nikcevich, Organ, Purins, Stepaniak, Walsh – 13

EXCUSED: Alds. Ewerdt, Herzog, Treis

ALSO PRESENT: J. Archambo, City Admin.; A. Kesner, City Atty.; N. Welch, Comm. Devel. Dir.

Ald. Krol in the Chair called the meeting to order at 7:16 p.m.

City wide energy policy

Ald. Krol acknowledged that this topic will take longer to discuss than the time allotted for the meeting, but he would like to get the ball rolling. He explained that many homeowners have to deal with the cost of gas, water and electricity. The city has fairly large budgets to deal with similar utility costs. According to an overview of the city's budget for energy, the city pays close to \$700,000 per year for fuel and just under \$500,000 for gas totaling well over \$1 million. The diesel budget alone went from \$300,000 to \$400,000 in just a couple of years. He pointed out that the city could save money through more prudent use of the city's utilities. He suggested looking at how city facilities are being run and how vehicle and fuel costs are being handled. He called for a committee to be formed to review the city's energy policy. This committee could be made up of Council members, staff, utility companies and residents. He introduced Rosemary Wehnes, a member of the Sierra Club, and local director for this region. He also mentioned John Barr a member of Renew Wisconsin. He noted that they have an energy policy that makes a lot of sense. The adoption of the Kyoto Protocol has the potential to reduce the impact of energy use in our cities.

Ms. Wehnes, Sierra Club 7922 Jackson Park Blvd., mentioned the ongoing debate about energy usage and what can be done at the local level. A growing number of cities and counties are working with groups like the BlueGreen Alliance and the campaign called "Cool Cities". Part of the Cool Cities program is finding solutions to clean energy in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. She noted that former Mayor Teresa Estness signed the Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement. A number of cities have pledged to reduce greenhouse emissions by 2012. This was also endorsed by the US Conference of Mayors. Over 850 mayors from 50 states have signed this agreement. There are a lot of "Cool Cities" located in Wisconsin. The Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement makes a commitment to look at the collective carbon footprint and to take steps to lower carbon emissions. Many cities are looking at ways to reduce their energy usage; however many cities have not yet come up with a plan.

Ms. Wehnes noted that there are many opportunities to use new technology to reduce energy. For example, in Salt Lake City they have installed LED traffic signals just as Wauwatosa has. The City of Scottsdale was the first US city to require that all new buildings meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards. She commented that perhaps the new fire station should have that certification. Those standards could be used in the city fleet by using hybrid vehicles. In

Charlotte, North Carolina, they have purchased 19 new hybrids and that has helped them save money.

Ms. Wehnes stressed that renewable energy, including solar and wind power, can reduce the country's reliance on polluting fossil fuels. She noted that Fort Collins, Colorado has a goal to reduce 50% of the city's electrical output by 2012. Waverly, Iowa has installed its own turbines. The City of Milwaukee has formed a "Green Team" and hired a director for sustainability. That person had a number of recommendations. The team is made up of a number of people from the community as well as elected officials.

Ms. Wehnes noted that Wauwatosa is using more biodiesel fuel. An energy committee would be able to identify policies that the city already adopted and then recommend initial and longer term items as well as a green house gas inventory to measure any reductions.

Ms. Wehnes reported that the US Conference of Mayors has endorsed changes in city building codes that would change energy efficiency in new buildings by 30%. She noted that there is an opportunity for the city to send a person to Minneapolis to vote for this program. Any interested parties can contact the website: www.coolcities.us.

Ald. Krol commented that saving energy is important because the city will be unable to project what it will cost in the coming years. He reiterated that right now the city is spending over \$1 million in energy costs for operating.

Rick O'Connor, Manager of Alternative Energy for WE Energies informed Council members that WE Energies has grants available to help in pursuing energy efficiency. If the city converts to solar energy WE Energies would buy back the energy that is not used. He stressed that WE Energies would like to incorporate LEED technology into the new fire station. There are a lot of opportunities and there is money available in the form of grants.

Ald. Maher commented that during every budget review they are told that the public works budget is not cost efficient so he would like to see this issue looked at more closely. Ald. Krol added that the city's landfill is capped. The methane that is present could be utilized to add to the heating of the public works garage. He noted that other cities have tried to capitalize on this method. Ald. Birschel pointed out that there are groups that are doing fundraising to help with the cost of adding solar panels to municipal buildings.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Carla A. Ledesma, City Clerk

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